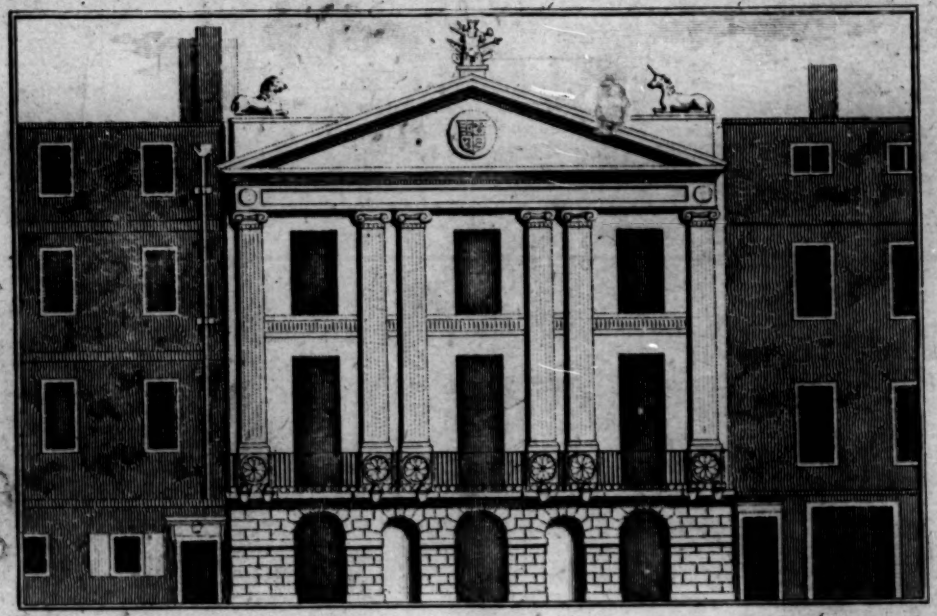
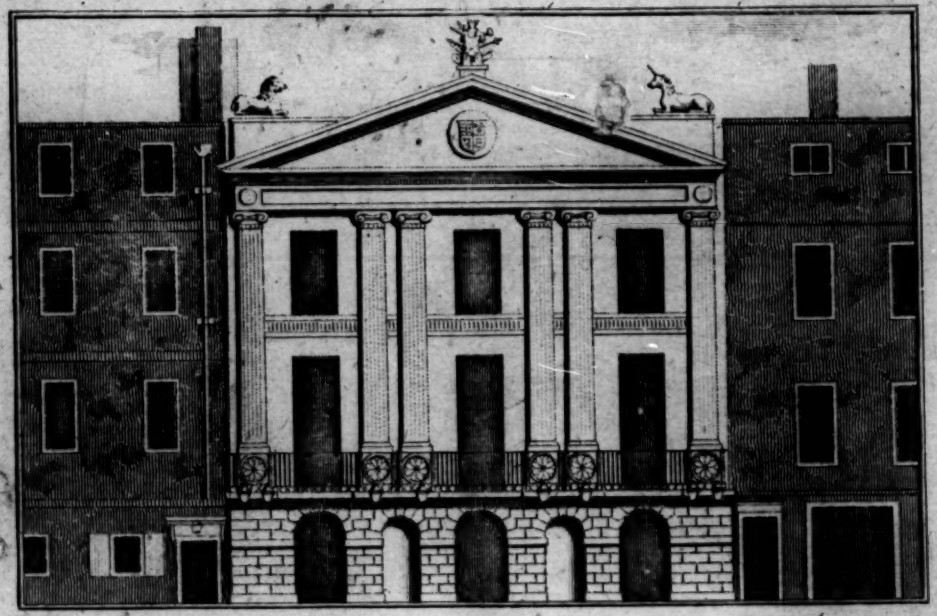


View of the Front of Old Drury Lane Theatre.



View of the Front of Old Drury Lane Theatre.

THE THEATRICAL JESTER:

OR

GREEN-ROOM WITTICISMS.

BEING

A Collection of Entertaining and Original

ANECDOTES,

BON MOTS, REPARTEES, *&c.*

Relating to

THE STAGE.

"Laugh while you Live, for life is but a Jeſt,
"Who laughs the moſt is ſure to live the beſt."

LONDON:

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PRICE 6D.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

THEATRICAL JESTER,

&c. &c.

1 A FOOLISH ſtage-ſtruck young man, ran away from his friends, and got among a moſt low and miſerable ſet of ſtrollers. A relation after a time diſcovered him juſt as he was going on the ſtage in *King Richard*, and on reading him a pretty ſevere lecture on his folly and diſobedience, received an anſwer ſuitable to all the ridiculous conſequence of a mock monarch. To which he anſwered, "theſe are fine lofty words, but 'tis a great pity *Mr. King Richard*, that you could not afford to buy a better pair of ſhoes."—The actor looking at his toes, which were ſtaring him in the face, without loſing his vivacity, cried out "Shoes! O ſhoes are things we kings dont *ſtand upon*."

2 When

2 When a certain charge was brought againſt Mr. Foote, of facetious memory, to which he proved an *alibi*: his friends adviſed him to proſecute for perjury. "I'll do it, (ſaid he) for I am ſure the ſcoundrel has been egg'd on in this buſineſs by the Dutcheſs of Kingſton, and I know no better mode of *egging him off*, than by letting him ſtand in the pillory." The late Lord Mansfield, after the trial was concluded, and the perjury evident, ſpeaking to Foote from the bench openly in the court, ſaid "This is a very providential *alibi*, it has baffled the moſt infamous conſpiracy that ever was ſet on *foot*.

3 A queer Put well known in the Green-room, being aſked at its cloſe on the firſt night, what he thought of the Three and the Deuce; replied, why at one part of the *game*, I thought it within an *ace* of being *damned*.

4 An itinerant player well known in the Weſt of England by the name of Mouthing Molesworth, ſome time ſince performed at Biddesford for his benefit, Boniface and Sir Charles Freeman, in the Stratagem; between the acts of which he ſung Jack the Guinea Pig, and danced a hornpipe, at the end of the play he recited Collins's Ode on the Paſſions; played Shift, Smirk, and Mother Cole, in the Minor, and concluded with a poetical Addreſs to the Audience.

5 Tom Weſton, of facetious memory, being in a ſtrolling company in Suſſex, when the ſucceſs

was

was even leſs than moderate, ran up a bill of three ſhillings with his landlord, who waiting on the comedian, inſiſted on having his money immediately. " Make yourſelf eaſy, my honeſt fellow, (ſaid Weſton) for by the Gods, I will pay you this night, in ſome ſhape or another." " See you do, Maſter Weſton, (retorted the landlord ſurlily) and d'ye hear, let it be as much in the ſhape of three ſhillings as poſſible."

6 " In a late new piece, Mrs Bland did not exhibit her wonted *ſpirit* ;" ſays a *tooth-pick-beau* to Charles Banniſter—" Perhaps," returned Charles, " The lady's *in love.*"

7 Burton, on being touched on the *noſe* by a piece of apple, exclaimed, " It may do here in the *Haymarket ;* but we can put them at defiance at *Drury Lane.*

8 The man who played the flute, by ſome accident broke it while in the orcheſtra at Covent Garden theatre ; Edwin running into the green-room, cried out " Poor fellow—poor fellow ;"—" What's the matter, my dear ſir, (cries Mrs. Webb) " Why madam, (rejoined Edwin,) poor Mr. ****** has juſt ſplit his *wind pipe.*

9 Charles Banniſter, in the time of the celebrated Foote, was keeping the green room in a continual roar of laughter, with his good things, during a morning rehearſal. A puppy of the firſt water, and a would-be critic, at length attracted

the wit's attention. He ran ſo hard upon his flimſy antagoniſt; as to occaſion a loſs of temper, and he ſat down in extreme dudgeon. A brother wag whiſpered Banniſter, "the gentleman ſays he'll blow you up."——"Will he, (ſays Charles,) then you know I muſt *go off*."

10 Mrs. Webb, whoſe loſs will not eaſily be made up to the town, at the time that poor Wewitzer, driven to his ways and means, turned fiſhmonger; remarked to Jack Banniſter, that, ſhe thought it was a ſtrange ſcheme! "I aſk your pardon, madam, (ſays Jack,) he is making a deal of money; venture a little, and go partners with him, it will then be *fiſh* and FLESH.

11 About the time that Wewitzer commenced dealer in *fiſh*, Dick Wilſon turned *coal merchant*.—Dick and Charles Banniſter were taking their bottle at Mat Williams's, (the Shakeſpear,) when the merchant obſerved, that it was his practice to go down into peoples kitchens and curry favor with the cookeys, by giving them *half crowns*. "Is it," ſays Banniſter, "why, then, was I a *cookey*, I'd be ſure to make you a low curtſey, and tell you it ſhould always be my endeavour to be GRATE-FULL."

12 Old Macklin, better known for his repartees than his delicacy, was aſked by a prim virgin of the wrong ſide of fifty, whoſe wiſh it was to be witty; if he ever *made love?* "No, madam,"—replied the veteran, "I get it ready made; but I ſhan't come to you, I promiſe you."

13 Bar-

13 Barrymore, coming late to the theatre, and having to dreſs for his part, was driven to the laſt moment, when to heighten his perplexity, the key of his draw was miſſing! "Damn it! (he exclaims) I muſt have ſwallowed it." "Never mind, (ſays Jack Banniſter, coolly,) it will ſerve to open your *cheſt*."

14 On a very fine evening, in May, the elder Banniſter, and friends, were amuſing themſelves at Spencer's coffee-room window, in Bow-ſtreet, with viewing the company throng to the theatre; one of the party ſeeing a very handſome hack drive up, exclaimed—"What an elegant ſpring coach!"—Charles replied, "All *Spring* coaches now!

15 A lady of extreme affectation, at the Hay-market theatre, who muſt be nameleſs, enquired of Bill Parſons, under the idea of indiſpoſition; how he thought ſhe looked. The wag replied, "I can't tell, madam, except you *uncover* your face."

16 A rope dancer at Bartholomew fair, making a falſe ſtep, came to the ground "Get up again you thief," ſays Weſton, who was preſent, "you have not hung your time."

17 Mrs. ***** was one night called *little* and *ugly*. "Come, come, (ſays Suett,) tell her ſomething *ſhe don't know*."—"Ah Dick," ſays her *ſighing* ſpouſe, who ſtood by, "that *is* a difficult matter."

18 A young

18 A young actor at Drury Lane theatre, whose ready wit generally procures pardon for impropriety, was one night *going his lengths*, as the *very* vulgar phrase runs, upon a well known veteran, who exclaimed—"Let me tell you, young gentleman, you deserve a check." "Do I?" says *hopeful*, then I can only say let it it be on your banker."

19 Garrick, whose vanity was pretty well known, was once exhibiting the venerable Lear to such effect, as to cause the centinel on the stage to faint away, during the last scene. When the curtain dropped, he ordered the man (then recovered) to attend him in the green-room, where he was rewarded for his great sensibility with a *guinea*. The fellow whose turn it was to stand in the same situation the succeeding night, hearing of his comrade's good luck, made a *sham* faint, but unfortunately all he gained thereby was a *dismission*.

20. Shuter, of merry memory, on being appointed to a part in which he was to ascend in a cloud, while singing, to the top of the stage, exclaimed, "It may be a flight of the *poet's*, but strike me comical, if it shall be a flight of *mine*."

21 When Parsons was manager of Richmond theatre, a few summers since, he engaged himself to meet a party at a house by the water side, to dine on a fish dinner. Three o'clock came, but no Parsons. "Where can he be?" said one of the company—"Where?" said another, "why he's crossing the Thames there by the bridge." "Cross-

sing

ſing the Thames! where?" "Why there." All the company rubbed their eyes *and look'd, and look'd, and look'd, and look'd again:* and all agreed the comedian was not there. On this the perſon ſaid, that he would not only prove he ſaw him croſs the Thames juſt before the houſe—but he would likewiſe prove he was croſſing it at that time, though broad day, and gentlemen could not, or pretended they could not, ſee him *Now day and night, but this* IS *wond'rous ſtrange*—"but prove, prove, prove, and we'll pay your reckoning," 'twas the general exclamation. "Follow me then to the Theatre." To the Theatre they went, where they found Parſons painting a ſcene of Richmond bridge, and giving a finiſhing touch to the *Thames* This ſcene was exhibited at night, and one more pictureſque is not to be found amidſt the range of ſcenery at this elegant ſummer theatre at this moment.

22 Some ſtrollers being lately taken before a magiſtrate in the country, one of the company named Kearns, was firſt examined, and being aſked his name, replied, "It was Bajazet, laſt night."—"And what is your profeſſion?" interrogated the juſtice. "I plays all the tyrants in tragedy."—"And what do you get by that, friend?" "Seven ſhillings a week, your honor, and finds my own jewels."

23 A diverting inſtance of the miſconception of inferior actors, occurred a few years ſince at Briſtol. Mr. Moody had ſelected Henry the VIIIth for his benefit, and caſt the part of Surry, to the late

late Roger Wright, who would not attend the rehearſals; Moody ſomewhat nettled by Wright's conduct, reproached him for his inattention to one of Shakeſpear's beſt plays "Come, come, Maſter Moody, (ſaid Roger,) you are wrong there, at any rate; it does not ſtrike me as any ſuch thing."—"No! (rejoined Moody,) give me your reaſons." "Look in the title-page, (ſaid the other,) and you will find it was diſapproved from the beginning;—ſee here (ſhewing the book,) it is noted as one of Shakeſpear's *hiſt.* plays"—thus miſtaking the abbreviation of the word hiſtorical, for a fixed mark of popular cenſure. After this blunder, Roger's phraſe of "It does not ſtrike me," became in great vogue in every theatrical company in the kingdom.

24 Some years ago, during a rehearſal at Covent Garden, Mr. Colman (at that time manager of that houſe) and Mr. Yates had ſome diſpute concerning the piece then in preparation; the latter went grumbling into the green-room, and on old Bobby Bates aſking what was the matter, Yates replied, "Oh nothing but little Colley is in his tantarums; faith, (continued he,) but I had a great mind to have put him in my pocket."—"And if you had, (cried Bates) you would have had more wit in your pocket, than you ever had in your head, Maſter Yates."

25 Waldron and Benſon, ſome ſeaſons ago, ſtanding at the door of the Uxbridge theatre when the Birmingham coach was paſſing by, one of the paſſengers on the roof called out, "How are you

O P. and P S?" "Who the devil could have ſuppoſed ſays Waldron, that fellow ſhould know any thing about O P and P S"——"I wonder you are ſurpriſed at it, replied Benſon,) don't you ſee he is upon the ſtage."

26 What ſhall we ſay to the ſituation of the *author* of *Vortigern:* the puniſhment of forgery, by the laws of the *theatre*, is more ſevere than by the laws of the *land:* in the latter caſe, *hanging* is the worſt; in the former—*damnation!*

27 In the play of "*Vortigern*," the hero, in the firſt line, invokes the ALMIGHTY, and in the next, the GODS. This mixed application in the writer was profane; and in the end, the *Gods* were againſt him.

28 On the "*Lie of the Day*" being performed at Covent Garden the night "*Vortigern*" appeared at Drury Lane,

Says Kemble to Lewis, "Pray what is your play?"
Cries Lewis to Kemble, "the *Lie of the Day.*"
"Say you ſo?" replied Kemble; "why we *act the ſame*;
"But to cozen the town, we adopt a *new name*;
"For, that *Vortigern's* Shakeſpeare's, we ſome of us ſay,
"Which you, all of you know, is a *lie* of the day."

29 The late Mr. Foote uſed frequently to paſs much of his time at the ſeat of Sir Francis Blake Delavall—during one of his viſits, he happened to be looking at ſome pigs belonging to Sir Francis, which

which had a few minutes before been ſerved with their mornings meal, and perceived a ſilver ſpoon thrown among their victuals: the grunting community making more than common noiſe, cauſed one of the maids to go and endeavour to ſilence them, and not obſerving Mr. Foote, ſhe cried in a pet, "Deuce take the pigs, what a riot they make." "Well they may, you jade, (replied Foote,) when they have got but one ſilver ſpoon among 'em all.

30 Some time ago in the green room of the Haymarket Theatre, ſome of the performers were complimenting young Walſh and little Menage, on their admirable performance in the Priſoner.—Mr. B——y, who was ſtanding by, obſerved that however clever children might be, yet they generally proved very bad performers when they arrived at years of maturity." "Then (replied Menage very archly) I dare ſay Mr. B——y you was one of the clevereſt children ever ſeen."

31 Mrs. W. (mother of the celebrated Billington) being one day rather hoarſe from a cold, her huſband coming into the parlour where ſhe was practiſing a new air for Vauxhall, obſerving a bottle of phyſic upon the table untouched, which ſhe ſaid ſhe had taken, flung it at her head with great fury. A gentleman in the neighbourhood was mentioning the cruelty of the circumſtance ſome ſhort time afterwards to a friend, who very drily obſerved, "He could not ſee any great impropriety in the

the affair; Mrs. W. was ſinging you ſay, and Mr. W. only accompanied her with the *bass viol.*

32 In the dialogue part of one of Mr. Dibdin's entertainments, he obſerves ſomething about fidlers retiring occaſionally during the courſe of a concert, to ſupply the chords of their inſtruments with needful roſin. Following their example he likewiſe retires for a few minutes. It happened on one of his nights, that Mrs. D. was obſerved through the crevice of the ſtage door, ſetting the compoſer's neckloth, which done, ſhe beſtowed on her beloved a kiſs. The ſelf ſame prying wight, alſo obſerving Miſs Dibdin, an amiable and beautiful young girl, through the Venetian blind of the oppoſite box, ſaid on the performer taking his ſeat, (unconſcious no doubt of her being his daughter) "Dibdin, I ſay, Dibdin, why did you not take your *rosin* from t'other ſide.

33 A young law-ſprig calling on Parſons one day, found him engaged in copying a ſmall Wilſon. "Upon my ſoul, (ſays Quitam) but I like you amazingly as far as you have gone."—Parſons replied, "Do you think ſo my boy; well you're a *young lawyer*, and may be a *judge.*"

34 The ſame gentleman in that excellent parody on Shakeſpeare's grave-digger, exemplified in the Scaffold-ſcene in Colman's ſurrender of Calais, in the heighth of his glee, (and when he liked his character who can be remembered more full of it,) roared out, "Here comes the King,

and if he likes not my gallows, why he's a gallows king, damn him."—The author who happened to be behind, trembled for the conſequence; but John Bull loyal, not ſervile, took it as an effuſion of pleaſantry, and no harm meant, and diſmiſſed with loud plaudits the comedian, whoſe whim (as he himſelf acknowledged,) had for a moment ran away with his prudence.

35 It is well known, that Shuter the celebrated comedian, in the early part of his life, was tapſter at a public houſe in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. A gentleman one day ordered him to call a coach, which he accordingly did.—It ſo happened, that the gentleman left his gold-headed cane in the coach, and miſſing it the next morning, went to the public houſe to enquire of the boy Ned, (who called the coach) whether he could tell the number. Shuter, who was then no great adept in figures, except in his own way of ſcoring up a reckoning, immediately replied, it was two pots of porter, a ſhilling's worth of punch, and a paper of tobacco: the gentleman upon this was as much at a loſs as ever, till Ned whipped out his chalk, and thus ſcored the reckoning: 44 for two pots of porter, 0 for a ſhilling's worth of punch, and a line acroſs the two pots of porter for a paper of tobacco, which formed the number 440. The gentleman in conſequence, recovered his cane, and thinking it a pity ſuch acuteneſs of genius ſhould be buried in an alehouſe, took him away and put him to ſchool, and thereby enabled him to ſhine as the firſt comedian of his time.

36 The

36 The damnation of dramatic productions, has frequently been occaſioned by whimſical contingencies; but the following inſtances being effected by *Jeu d' Eſprit*, not generally known, will we hope, be acceptable to our readers.

In the early diſplay of Mr. Garrick's powers at Drury-lane, a tragedy was brought forth, in which Roſcius ſuſtained the character of a king.—Tho' there was nothing remarkably brilliant in the play, it met with no oppoſition till the fifth act, when Garrick, as the dying monarch, bequeathed his empire between his two ſons, in the following line;

"Jointly 'twixt you my crown I do bequeath."

When a quaint man getting up in the pit, rejoined,

"Then, Gods! they've juſt got Half-a crown a-piece!

This threw the whole houſe into ſuch a comic convulſion, that not another word of the tragedy, was uttered on the ſtage.

37 Villiers, the facetious Duke of Buckingham, being preſent at the firſt repreſentation of one of Dryden's pieces of heroic nonſenſe, where a lover ſays,

"My wound is great, becauſe it is ſo ſmall."—

The Duke inſtantly exclaimed from the ſtage-box,

"Then 'twould be greater were there none at all."

The effect of this repartee was ſuch, that the play was inſtantly damned.

38 Suett, Benſon, and Burton, (the latter of whom is remarkable for having a very *red* noſe,)

were converſing on a warm ſunny day, at the ſtage door in Suffolk Street, when a waſp flew about them to their great annoyance. "Burn the thief," ſays Benſon. "Then *put him on Burton's nose*," rejoined Suett.

39 Quick and Wild was once diſputing in the green-room; Wild contended he knew every line of Shakeſpear. "Indeed you do not," replies Quick. "How do you prove it," ſaid Wild.—"It will be proved one day," returned Quick; "for there is a gentleman, nameſake to the bard, in Rope Maker's Walk, will furniſh you with a line you never met with before, depend on't, my boy."

40 Some years back, during the performance at Drury Lane theatre, a lady's black cloak hanging over the green boxes accidentally took fire.—Jack Banniſter, who was performing, confuſed by the accident, forgot his cues, and could not hear the prompter. After a long pauſe, he ſtepped forward and ſaid, "Ladies and Gentlemen, the *fire* of my recollection is quite *extinguiſhed*."

41 When Dignum made his firſt appearance at Drury Lane theatre, he was more remarkable for his taſte in ſinging, than his taſte in dreſs; the ladies in the green-room were accuſtomed to rally him on his attire, and his perſon which is ſhort and ruſty—Dignum, who is a good natured man, took all kindly. On the night he was to play *Cimon*, having arrayed himſelf with much care, he ruſhed

ruſhed rather proudly into the green-room, and demanded of Charles Banniſter, who was to perform *Merlin*, if he did not look well—"No," replied Charles, "you look more like a *Hog* than a *Cimon*."*

42 Dignum and Moſes Kean the mimic, were both taylors and intimate friends, Charles Banniſter met them under the Piazza in Covent Garden, arm in arm: "I never ſee thoſe men together, (ſaid he) but they put me in mind of one of Shakeſpeare's comedies." But which of them Banniſter. "Why *measure for measure!*"

43 One evening laſt ſeaſon, at Covent Garden theatre, Incledon during the ſymphony to "*The Heaving of the Lead*," in *Hartford Bridge*, was ſeized with a violent fit of coughing A man from the gallery cried out, "take a *Patirosa!*"

44 *The effects of dress* —Garrick, in the early part of his life, performed Ranger with moſt uncommon ſpirit, and ſo well *dreſſed*, and *looked* the part, that a young lady of great family, fortune, and high expectation, fell violently in love with him. Her friends finding it in vain to reaſon with her, took her to ſee him perform Scrub; the very contemptible appearance he made in that part, wrought a perfect cure.

45 A member of a debating ſociety in a patriotic ſpeech, embelliſhed it by a quotation, (ſaid he) "As Shakeſpear ſays in his immortal tragedy of Veniee preſerved,"

"——To

* Cant terms for Shilling and Sixpence.

" ——————To ſee our Senators
" Cheat the deluded people with a ſhew
" Of liberty, which yet they ne'er muſt taſte of,
" They make us ſlaves, and tell us 'tis our charter."

At the concluſion of his ſpeech, the preſident aroſe and addreſſed him thus. " Sir, I am much obliged to you for your very elegant and patriotic ſpeech; but I muſt beg leave to rectify you in one miſtake which you made, that is, Sir, that the Tragedy of Venice Preſerved, was not written by Shakeſpeare, but by Ben Johnſon." A gentleman preſent, immediately aroſe and ſaid, " I would beg leave, Sir, alſo to rectify you in an error which you have fallen into, Venice Preſerved, is not written by either *Shakeſpeare* or *Ben Johnſon*, but by *Otway*."

46 While that prodigy of muſical excellence, Incledon, was at Saliſbury, a ſingular manœuvre was practiſed by one of the dramatic ſquad, who had frequently performed in the town, but had never been ſucceſsful on his benefit night. He watched in the church porch, until the rector had diſmiſſed his auditory. He then began to cover the tombſtones in the cemetery, with his bills. Excited by the oddity of the meaſure, many made enquiry into the cauſe—" I cannot get the living to come to my benefit," replied the diſcomfited actor, " ſo I am trying what influence I have with the dead."

47 " Do you know what made my voice ſo melodious?" ſaid a celebrated vocal performer of aukward manners to Banniſter."—" No," replied the

the other. "Why then I will tell you; when I was a youth of fifteen, I, by accident, ſwallowed ſome train oil."—"I don't think my friend," rejoined Charles, "it would have done you any harm, if, at the ſame time, you had ſwallowed a *dancing maſter!*"

48 Mrs. I——ch——d the dramatiſt, paid a viſit to a dramatic manager of notorious gallantry, and offered him a piece in five acts—the lady being handſome, and the manager amorous, ſome circumſtances enſued which the lady did not think entirely reconcileable to female modeſty.—However, after many ſtruggles in catching him by the queue, ſhe eſcaped the fangs of the ſcenic monarch—When ſhe had arrived unpolluted at home, ſhe related the occurrence, which ſhe accompanied with this momentous queſtion—"What, my dear, could I have poſſibly done if this Tarquin had worn a wig?"

49 Charles Banniſter being caught one day in a ſhower of rain, went for ſhelter into a comb maker's ſhop, where an old man was working. "I am ſorry, (ſaid Banniſter to the man) that a perſon at your time of life ſhould have ſo much pain."—"Pain, I have no pain, thank God." exclaimed the man. "Yes you muſt, are you not cutting your teeth?"

50 A young woman applied to the elder Colman, to be engaged as a vocal performer—when deſired to give an inſtance of her ability, ſhe bagan *Machere amie* my charming fair thus;—"March

after

after me my charming fair;" the manager bowed, and the lady withdrew.

51 No man's name is better known among the erratic tribes of Theſpis, than Mr. Whitely's; the anecdotes ariſing from his ſingularity of diſpoſition are innumerable:—this gentleman (formerly the manager of a company who performed in Nottinghamſhire) having conſtantly an eye to his intereſt, one evening during the performance of Richard the Third, gave a tolerable proof of that being his leading principle. Repreſenting the crook'd back'd tyrant, he exclaimed:

"Hence babbling dreams, you threaten here in vain, Conſcience avaunt"——*That man in the brown wig there has got into the pit without paying.*"—Richard's himſelf again!"

52 When the late Lord Orrery, and Mr. Garrick, were diſcourſing upon theatrical ſubjects, the peer took occaſion to mention Mr Moſſop as the greateſt tragedian of the age, excepting Mr. Garrick himſelf:—"By no means," ſaid the player, "as it is well known that his *voice* his coarſe and unharmonious."—"Well, but excepting his *voice*, you'll allow him to have all the other requiſites of a great tragedian?"—"No; his *action* has a feature of ſameneſs in it that muſt ever deſtroy the neceſſary deluſion of the ſcene."—"Well, but Garrick, excepting his *voice* and *action*, you'll allow him to have all the other requiſites of a great tragedian?"—"No; his *conceptions* are not governed by truth."—"Well, well,

well, but Garrick, excepting his *voice, action,* and *conception,* yon'll allow him, I hope, to have all the other requiſites of a great tragedian?"—"No; his *perſon* is to the laſt degree ungraceful."—"Well, well, my friend Davy, (to be ſure I don't underſtand theſe matters ſo well as you) but the devil's in it if you won't allow, excepting his *voice, action, conception,* and *perſon,* that he has all the other requiſites of a great tragedian?"——"Yes, yes, my Lord, allow me thoſe four trifling impediments, and I will give you full credit for your encomium on Mr. Moſſop."

53 When the School for Scandal was performing at Drury Lane theatre the firſt ſeaſon, Cumberland ſat in the ſtage box, and was obſerved never to ſmile at any of the good things which the author has put into the mouths of the ſcenic perſonages. When the comedy was concluded, he improperly remarked, he was much ſurprized, that the audience ſhould laugh ſo immoderately at what could not make him ſmile. As there are ſocial traitors in all circles, this ſarcaſm was conveyed to Sheridan, who very coolly obſerved, that Cumberland was truly ungrateful, for not ſmiling at the comedy in queſtion, as he had ſeen a tragedy of Cumberland's at Covent Garden theatre, and had laughed from the beginning to the end.

54 A country performer, after having ranted away the two firſt acts of Othello, in the interval before the commencement of the third, ſtept out of the theatre, and well knowing his ſable generalſhip had

had no proviſion for his ſupper, after the fatigue of the character he was enacting, popped into a poulterer's ſhop, oppoſite the play houſe entrance, and purloined a brace of fine partridges; after which he returned to his ſtation, and went on very pathetically with the lines

> What ſenſe had I of her ſtolen hours of luſt,
> I ſaw it not, thought it not—it harm'd not me;
> I ſlept the next night well, was free and merry,
> I found not Caſſio's kiſſes on her lips.

when a pointer belonging to a ſportſman in the pit, invited by the powerful ſcent of the game, jumped on the ſtage, and re-ſtole from the Moor what he had juſt filched from the dealer in fowls.—The actor finding himſelf thus detected, turned towards the audience, as the animal was eſcaping with his prize to his maſter, and went on in his part with extraordinary feeling and emphaſis:

> He that is robb'd, not wanting what is ſtol'n,
> Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all.

55 A lady who had ſeen Garrick and Barry both perform the character of Romeo, gave her opinion of the balcony ſcene thus, viz. "When I ſaw Garrick, (ſaid ſhe,) he played it with ſuch *energy* and *ſpirit*, that had I been Juliet, I ſhould have thought he would *jump up* to me. But when I ſaw Barry, he diſplayed ſuch *ſoftneſs* and *melody*, that had I been Juliet, I ſhould have *jumped down* to him."

56 That

56 That excellent comedian, Mr. Quick, who is not leſs known for his wit, than for his abilities as an actor, having appointed to meet a friend on particular buſineſs, went to his houſe, and informed the ſervant he wanted her maſter. "*He is gone out, Sir,*" ſays ſhe. "Then your miſtreſs will do" ſaid Quick. "She (ſaid the girl) *is gone out too.*"—"My buſineſs is of conſequence, (returned he,) is your maſter's ſon at home."—"No, Sir, (returned the girl) *he is gone out.*"—"That's unlucky indeed, (replied he) but perhaps it may not be long before they return; I'll ſtep in and ſit by your fire a bit" "Oh Sir, (ſaid the girl) the fire *is juſt gone out too.*" Upon which the diſappointed comedian bade her inform her maſter, that he did not expect to be received ſo *coolly.*"

57 Garrick and Foote being in company together, the former taking a light guinea out of his pocket, obſerved, that ſomebody had impoſed upon him, by paſſing a piece conſiderably under weight, and he was ſo much enraged, that he ſwore he had a great mind to *throw it to hell* "That confirms (replied Foote) what I have always ſaid and believed, that you know how to make *a guinea go as far as any man.*"

58 Dr. Johnſon being one night at Drury-lane theatre, to ſee Garrick play Macbeth; in one of the moſt intereſting ſcenes, he and the company in the box where he ſat, were interrupted by the impertinence of a young man of faſhion, who inſiſted on having a place, though none was kept for him; the

the diſturbance continued till the end of the act, when the doctor turning about with great contempt, cried, "Pſhaw, Sir, how can you be ſo miſtaken? *Your place is in the ſhilling gallery.*"

59 Foote being told that a man in an high office, which gave him an opportunity of handling much caſh, had married his kept miſtreſs, "Good God, (ſaid he) that fellow is always robbing the public."

60 When Mrs. Kennedy's Macheath had a great run, ſhe happened to be pretty far advanced in her pregnancy; a theatrical wag obſerved, "If the managers did not ſuſpend the performance for ſome time, the audience would find Mrs. Kennedy *labour* in the character very ſoon."

61 The well known Dagger Marr, Tommy Clough, and Harry Vaughan, all of Drury-Lane theatre, met one morning at rehearſal; Clough kept his hand in his coat pocket a long time: which Dagger taken notice of, aſked him what he had got there? "I have got a partridge, (ſays Clough,) which I intend to preſent to the little man," meaning Mr. Garrick. "Tut! (ſays Vaughan,) he won't accept of it."—"Won't he, (ſays Dagger, who was well acquainted with the penurious ſpirit of Garrick,) yes, by G—d, he'll take it, or a roll and treacle if you offer it to him."

62 Mr. Palmer of Drury-lane theatre (I mean the ladies' Mr. Palmer) appeared at a rehearſal in a violent

violent perturbation of mind, on ſome intelligence he had juſt heard. Mr. Banniſter requeſted to know what made him ſo uneaſy? "Monarchs, my dear Sir," ſays Palmer, with a tragedy ſtrut, "monarchs have met with afflictions, then why ſhould I grieve? my puppy of a brother, a cub, Sir, has made as bad a match as he poſſibly could make; he was married yeſterday, and the girl is as pennyleſs as a third-rate actres's dreſſing woman." "What is the lady's name?" ſays Banniſter. "Sharp, I think they call her," ſays Palmer. "My dear friend," ſays Banniſter, "I don't ſee why you ſhould fret ſo, it was a muſical wedding, there was a *flat* and a *ſharp*."

63 Foote dined one day at the Caſtle at Salthill. When the landlord produced the bill, Foote thought it very exorbitant, and aſked him his name?"—"Partridge, an't pleaſe you," replied the hoſt.—"Partridge, (reſumed Foote,) it ſhould be Woodcock, by G—, by the length of your *bill*.

64 The death of Mr. Holland, of Drury-lane theatre, who was the ſon of a *baker* at Chiſwick, had a very great effect upon the ſpirits of Foote, who had a very warm friendſhip for him: being a legatee, as well as appointed by the will of the deceaſed one of his bearers; he attended the corpſe to the family vault at Chiſwick, and there very ſincerely paid a plentiful tribute of tears to his memory. On his return to town, by way of alleviating his grief, he called in at the Bedford coffee-houſe; when Harry Woodward coming up to him,

aſked him if he had not been paying the laſt compliment to his friend Holland? "Yes, poor fellow," ſays Foote, almoſt weeping at the ſame time, "I have juſt ſeen him *ſhoved* into the *family oven!*"

65 A few years ago, Foote went to ſpend his Chriſtmas with the late C—— B——n, Eſq. when the weather being very cold, and but bad fires, occaſioned by a ſcarcity of wood in the houſe, Foote was determined to make his viſit as ſhort as poſſible; accordingly, on the third day after he went there, he ordered his chaiſe, and was preparing to ſet out for town. Mr. B——n, ſeeing him with his boots on in the morning, aſked him what hurry he was in? and preſſed him to ſtay. "No, no," ſays Foote, "was I to ſtay any longer, you would not let me *have a leg to ſtand on.*" "Why, ſure (ſays Mr. B——n,) we do not drink ſo hard." "No, (ſays the wit) but there is ſo *little* wood in your houſe, that I am afraid one of your ſervants may light the fires ſome morning with *my right leg.*"

66 That admired ſon of the comic muſe, Mr. Quick, belonging to the Liverpool company of comedians, at the time the celebrated *Naval Review of Portſmouth* made ſo much noiſe in the world. One of the gentlemen of the theatre, after ſaluting Mr. Quick one morning in the green-room, whipt open his waiſtcoat; the ladies ſet up a loud laugh, which the wag heightened, by obſerving *the ladies had an opportunity of ſeeing a* Naval *Review, without going to Portſmouth!*

The

67 The ſame excellent companion happened to be in company with a gentleman, whoſe father was a *footman*, when heraldry became the topic of converſation: the gentleman obſerved, "he had ſeen his arms on a Baronet's carriage of his name, and they muſt be related." "No doubt," ſaid the wit, "your family, Sir, is pretty extenſive: your father's *arms* muſt have been upon many carriages."

68. A young fellow who fancied himſelf poſſeſſed of talents ſufficient to cut a figure on the ſtage in comedy, offered himſelf to the manager of Covent Garden theatre, who deſired him to give a ſpecimen of his abilities before Mr. Quin. After he had rehearſed a ſpeech or two, in a wretched manner, Quin aſked him, with a contemptuous ſneer, whether he had ever done any part in comedy. The young fellow anſwered, that he had done the part of Abel in the Alchymiſt. "You miſtake, boy," replied Quin, "It was the part of Cain you acted, for I am ſure you murdered Abel."

69 Two countrymen who had never ſeen a play in their lives, nor had any notion of it, went to the theatre in Drury-Lane, when they placed themſelves ſnug in the gallery; the firſt muſic played which they liked well enough, then the ſecond, to their great ſatisfaction. At length the curtain drew up, and three or four actors entered to begin the play; upon which one of the countrymen cried to the other, "Come Hodge, let us

be going, *mayhap the gentlemen are talking about business,*"

70 Winſtone once had a quarrel with his manager, and abruptly leaving the London ſtage, contrary to the advice of Quin, went ſtrolling into Wales. After two years abſence, on his return from Swanſea to Briſtol, by ſea, he was near being drowned, having met with a ſtorm which ſtranded the ſhip, by which he loſt all his cloaths, and what little money he had in his ſtrong box.—In this ſituation he ſcrambled to London, and getting to one of his old haunts about the garden, went to bed, and ſulked for two days without ever getting out of it. Quin, by accident, heard of his ſituation, and immediately calling on the manager, had Winſtone put on his uſual ſalary, and his name actually advertiſed in the bills for the next day's performance. He then called upon his taylor, who, having Winſtone's meaſure, took him to Monmouth-ſtreet, and bought him a full ſuit of cloaths.—Thus accoutered, Quin called upon his old friend, whom he found in bed very melancholy. After ſome converſation, in which Winſtone related all his misfortunes, Quin aſked him why he was not at rehearſal? This at firſt aſtoniſhed poor Winſtone, till the other explaining the circumſtance, he fell upon his knees with gratitude. "But zounds, my dear Jemmy, (ſays Winſtone) what ſhall I do for cloaths, and a little money?" "As for the cloaths (ſays Quin) here they are: but as for money, *by G—d you muſt put your hand into your own pocket.*" Winſtone experienced

rienced his friend's humanity even in this expreſſion; for, ſearching the breeches pocket, he found Ten guineas.

71 During the performance of *Admetus* at the Opera Houſe, a circumſtance happened, which at once manifeſts a vocal excellence in the famous Cuzzoni, and the humour of an Engliſh Gallery. While ſhe was ſinging *Sen vola*, a ſong in the firſt act, calculated to diſplay her natural warble, a fellow in the gallery cried out, "D——n her, ſhe has got a neſt of nightingales in her belly."

72 The following *Jeu d' Esprit* appeared a few years ago, in ridicule of a great deal of ſerious writing, which was encouraged at the time, againſt a propoſed league between the Theatrical Potentates of Drury Lane and Covent Garden, for the purpoſe of interchanging Performers, and otherwiſe amicably ſupporting their mutual intereſts.—The plan undoubtedly had ſome tendency to weaken dramatic competition; and of courſe, as it alarmed the actors, there was much talk of mutiny, riots, &c. The pleaſantry of the following *ſuppoſed correſpondence*, greatly contributed to reſtore good-humour to the green-room.

Faithful Copies of Letters between HOPKINS *and* WILD, *Prompters to the Monopolizers.*

Dear Wild, Drury Lane, Nov. 9.

For God's ſake, lend me a couple of *Conſpirators*, for to t—Recollect, you have borrowed one of ours for a nging Druid, and another of our beſt is Doge of Venice on *Packer's* reſignation.

Entirely and devotedly yours, HOPKINS.

My Dear Hopkins, Covent Garden, Nov. 9.

I have ordered them to look you out two of our genteeleſt Aſſaſſins, and I'll take care they ſhall go ſhaved and ſober. Pray tell *Farren* he muſt play our Archbiſhop to-morrow; we'll cut the part that he may dreſs time enough afterwards for your General in *The Camp*.

Yours, perpetually, WILD.

P. S. If you have a Full Moon to ſpare, I wiſh you'd lend it us for Thurſday. I ſend you ſome Lightning that I can venture to recommend.

Dear Hopkins, Covent Garden, Nov. 11.

Pray how ſhall we manage without *Smith* to-morrow, ? I depended on your lending him us for *Harry the Fifth*; but I now ſee you have put him up for *Charles Surface*. Cou'dn't you let him come to us, and play two acts of *Harry*, as you don't want him in *Charles* till *your third?* and then *Hull* ſhall read the reſt, with an apology for *Smith*'s being ſuddenly hoarſe, ſprained his ancle, &c. &c.

Cordially yaurs, WILD.

P. S. My Veſtal Virgin gets ſo curſed big, I wiſh you'd lend us *Mrs. Robinson* for a night.

Dear Wild, Drury Lane, Nov. 11.

By particular desire, our Veſtal is not transferable, but we have a ſpare Venus, and duplicate Junos; ſo ſend a hackney-coach for which ever ſuits you. The ſcheme for *Smith* won't do—but change your play to any thing; nor w[illegible] *The Camp* to *The School for Scand[illegible]* to [illegible] you an overflow. Thoroughly yours, HOPKINS.

My

My Dear Fellow, Covent Garden, Nov. 12.

Here's the Devil to do about our Tueſday's Pantomime—the blackſmith can't repair our great Serpent till Friday, and the old camel that we thought quite ſound has broken down at rehearſal; ſo pray ſend us your Elephant by the bearer, and a ſmall Tiger with the longeſt tail you can pick out.—I muſt trouble you too for a dozen of your beſt dancing ſhepherds for that night; for though I ſee you'll want them for *Highwaymen*, in the *Beggar's Opera*, they'll be quite in time for us afterwards.

For ever compleatly yours, WILD.

Dear Wild, Drury Lane, Nov. 12.

I juſt write you a line while the beaſts are packing up, to beg you'll not be out of ſpirits, as you may depend on the Shepherds, and any other animals you have occaſion for. I have it in orders to acquaint you too, that as we dont uſe *Henderſon* for *Falſtaff* on Friday, you may have him for *Richard*, with a dozen and a half of *our* Soldiers for *Boſworth Field*, only begging you'll return 'em us in time for *Cox.heath*.

Totally yours, HOPKINS.

PS. Lend me a Cupid—mine has got the meaſles.

Covent Garden, Nov 12.

Dear Hopkins,

Thank you for *Henderſon* and the Soldiers—do let them bring their Helmets, for ours are tinning. The bearer is our Cupid, at a ſhilling a night, finding his own w[illegible]gs.

Genuinely yours, WILD.

73 His M —— being at the play-houſe ſoon after the impoſing an additional duty on ſtrong beer, a fellow in the upper gallery called out to one of his acquaintance, and aſked him if he would drink; for he had got a full pot. "What did you give for your full pot?" ſaid the other. "Three-pence halfpenny." "Three-pence halfpenny! why where did you ſend for it?" "To the new King's-head." "You fool," ſaid the other, "why did you not ſend to the old King's-head? you would have had it there for three-pence."

74 Colonel G — coming to Foote in Suffolk Street, in an elegant new phæton, at parting deſired Foote would come to the door, juſt to look at it:— "'Tis a pretty thing," ſaid the Colonel, "and I have it on a new plan."—"Before I ſet my eyes on it," ſaid Foote, "my dear Colonel, I'm damnably afraid you have it on the old plan—never to pay for it."

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